

Penguin's Pointers

By Alan Opdyke

I offer this suggestion and any others to follow as simply just that. These are things I do in my fish room and from this you may pick up something that will help you in either saving time or solving a problem you are experiencing.

This one is on water changes. I change 30% of my water every five days. I do that as I feel a once a week change is not often enough to get the dirt from the bottom that accumulates. Additionally, I have a total of six racks of tanks in my fish room. If I wipe the inside of all the glass of the tanks on a different row each water change that means in 30 days every tank gets a wipe down.

To remove water I use a self-priming pump and a length of hose that feeds directly into the drainpipe that comes down from my sink before it goes into the wall.



To keep from sucking out valuable fish I fabricated a siphon type of tube from CPVC pipe. As you can see from the picture it is made from very simple parts such as elbows, a tee, caps and some straight pipe. I put the slots in it by loading two saw blades into my hack saw side by side which cut a wide enough slot to feed a sufficient amount of water and yet not too wide to allow guppies to pass through.



I realize many people use water straight from the faucet and just add a de-chlorinator. I use aged water for several reasons. I have found in my area there is a lot of “stuff” in the city water. Additionally my hot water heater runs out of hot water causing me to fill tanks in shifts so to speak while I wait for the hot water heater to cycle. This becomes very time consuming. So, I age water in 55 gallon plastic barrels as shown and add Amquel which has been the most effective treatment I have found. I have literally tried fifteen or twenty different water treatments and the very best success I have had as far as fish reaction and caudal deterioration is Amquel. I keep the water constantly circulating using a large bubble up filter. Since the water is in the room with the fish tanks in five days, no matter what the water temperature was when I filled the barrels, the water is the same as the water in the tanks.



To refill the tanks I use a standard sump pump bought at any Home Depot or like store and a hose that hangs over the edge of the tank with a cut off valve.



The whole process takes less than two hours for sixty tanks and I never lift anything real heavy.